The LORD'S DESIRE *to the Work of his Hands*; or, *A* YOUNG CONVERT *soon gathered.*

A

SERMON

Occaſioned by the DEATH of

Mr. *Edward Killingback*,

WHO

Departed this Life the 18th Day of *October*, 1738. Aged Twenty Three.

The Subſtance whereof was preached to the Church of Chriſt, at the Meeting-Houſe in *Philpot-Lane*, Lord's Day, *October* the 22d.

By WILLIAM BENTLEY.

MICAH vii. 1.

My Soul deſires the firſt ripe Fruits.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

CHURCH *of* CHRIST,

Together with the

AUDITORY that ſtatedly Attends my Miniſtry, I wiſh all Grace, Mercy and Peace.

THIS Sermon had never been made publick, but by the preſſing Deſires of many of You, which has induced me to comply with your Requeſt, though I have been for ſome Weeks wavering in my Mind concerning it; yet ſince I have Reaſon to hope, that when this Sermon was preached amongſt You, that the Lord was pleaſed to attend it, thereby to make ſome

Impreſſions upon ſome young Ones that Day, I hope, if it be the Pleaſure of the Lord to add his Bleſſing in the Peruſal of it, that it may be a ſecond Time uſeful unto their Souls; that if Convictions were then faſtened upon their Minds, or the Work begun helped forward, I ſhall have Pleaſure to ſee the Work of the Lord proſper in his Hands, who will not break the bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax.

This Providence, I hope, has had its Uſe already in ſome Meaſure, to encourage others to join themſelves unto the Lord in a Covenant not to be forgotten. Since I firſt miniſter'd amongſt You, many from amongſt us, as alſo from amongſt You, are now at Reſt in the ſilent Grave. And ſince the Preaching of this Sermon, Two of our Brethren are called Home: But, bleſſed be the Lord, we are favoured to ſee them go to Heaven, not in a Cloud, but in a Chariot paved with Love, for the Sons and Daughters of Jeruſalem. *The many Removes that he hath made! Yet You of this Church have great Reaſon to rejoice, that he is yet building up the Tabernacle of* David, *and the Ruins thereof that Death hath made:* For he

he is the Repairer of the Breach, and the Reſtorer of Paths to dwell in; *for he has not left off his Kindneſs to the Living*, but at our Gates are all Manner of pleaſant Fruits for our Beloved. *Therefore let theſe kind and gracious Appearances of our dear Lord for us, make us more thankful and chearful in his Service, though we may be little amongſt the Thouſands of* Judah.

I know Sermons of this Kind are much run after; and the Expectations of Perſons are commonly great with regard unto the Character of the Deceaſed. I neither like the Place for it, nor the Thing it ſelf: Encomiums on the Dead are oftentimes ſo fulſome, that while the Preacher is applauding of them for their Excellencies, it may be, one half of the Congregation is ready to condemn him, and think it's more for Hire than any Thing elſe that the Man ſpeaks. I muſt confeſs, the many ſuch that I have heard, has given me a great Diſlike unto Sermons of this Kind; *yet* I can, *with Pleaſure, preach on theſe Occaſions, to improve the Providences unto the Living*; *and think I ſhould be unkind to refuſe the Requeſt of a dying Friend, that ſhould deſire of me to make*

make known either the Savour of that Grace he had experienced, or thoſe Comforts that were handed in by any Word of the Lord, that it might be publiſhed to others for the ſpiritual Benefit and Comfort of their Souls; as was the Caſe of this young Plant. Theſe Words had been of great Uſe to him, as I find by the Copies of ſome Letters that he left behind him. When he firſt came under the Miniſtry of this Church, he was filled with Prejudice againſt ſome of the Doctrines of the Goſpel; but the Lord was pleaſed to remove them all, and made him in love with the pure Grace of God, as diſplayed in the everlaſting Love of Father, Son, and Spirit, as it's the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever. In his Letters I find an uncommon Deſire and Breathing of Soul after Glory, to be with Chriſt; and I have thought, that that particular Circumſtance that he met with the Day he gave in his Experience amongſt us, foreboded his ſudden Remove from us. I ſhall not now relate it (it's well known to my ſelf and others) leſt it ſhould become the Jeſt and Banter of Perſons in this Day of Incredulity and Unbelief. He was known to many of You that attend my Miniſtry; he is taken, You are left; how

do

do You honour the Lord? The Lord ſaith, He that honours me, I will honour. *One way, Sirs, to honour Chriſt, is to give up Your Names to him, who is Your Prince. If You have taſted that he is gracious, this is one Way to demonſtrate Your Love to him:* If a Man love me, he will, *ſaith Chriſt,* keep my Commandments, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him. *In his Church he dwells; that is his Courts; there he is to be ſeen and converſed with; this is his Garden, into which he comes to gather Lilies; and, ſhould it not be Your Concern, that, when he comes to gather You by Death, You may be found in his Garden, and not in an unincloſed Field or Common, as the World unto the Saints is, doing Service for him in his Church?*

I have made ſome Addition unto this Sermon, though not much, but have kept as much as I could to what I delivered amongſt You. I have added the Song that was ſung at the Cloſe of the Lord's Supper, which was ſo refreſhing to his Soul, as it was the laſt Time he was amongſt us. And now, my dear Brethren and Friends, I recommend You, and

this plain Performance, unto the Word of his Grace, for a Divine Bleſſing, who is able to build You up, and give You an Inheritance, amongſt them that are ſanctified. *And deſire Your Prayers for me,* That I may finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord.

Yours,

In the Service of Chriſt,

WILLIAM BENTLEY.

JOB XIV. 14, 15.

If a Man die, ſhall he live again? All the Days of my appointed Time will I wait till my Change come. Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer thee: Thou wilt have a Deſire to the Work of thine Hands.

THE wiſe Man *Solomon* tells us, that *no Man knoweth either Love, or Hatred, by all that is before us* [a]. And were the Children of God to make a Judgment of their State by the Diſpenſations of Divine Providences towards them, they would be caſt; *But we have a more ſure Word of Prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a Light that ſhineth in a dark Place* [b]. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God* [c]. *Job*'s Name ſeemed to pourtray what the Lord deſigned to do with him; for his Name, as one obſerves, ſignifies,

[a] Eccleſ. ix. 1. [b] 2 Pet. i. 19. [c] Rom. viii. 14.

 for-

sorrowful, hated, or howling out; the Trials he passed under, and his Distress in them, discover his Sorrowfulness; and how he was shot at, and malign'd by Satan, discovers that he was hated of him; the Instrument he makes use of, his Wife, to add to his Affliction, and the Anguish of his Soul under the same, made him break out with those dreadful clamours against God in cursing of his Birth, *Chap.* the Third. This may more fitly be called Howling than the Language of a Child of God, yet through all the Lord brought *Job* out of this Affliction, as Gold from the Furnace well refined. In this Chapter *Job* speaks of what Man is born unto, Trouble, the Lot of all Men; and *Job* knew what Door this came in at, for he was not a Stranger unto Sin in its original, as we stood in *Adam* [d], for he speaks of *Adam*'s Transgression, or Iniquity. He also was experimentally led to know the Corruption of his Nature, as, when he saith, *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? no, not one*, ver. 4. Nay, he seemeth to suppose, that to some, Troubles don't end here by Death, as in the Case of the Wicked, for they shall live again in the Body to know Sorrow and Trouble worse than before, when they shall reap the Fruit of their Doings, *and in the Sparks they have*

[d] Job xxxi. 33.

kindled,

kindled, they ſhall lie down in Sorrow[e]; which may be gathered from the Similitude *Job* makes uſe of to ſet out the Doctrine of the Reſurrection by, in *ver.* 7. to the 12th. Tho' this will be the Condition of all the Ungodly of the World; yet the Saints, as they lay down all Troubles at Death, ſo they ſhall take none of them up in that Morning, but *be filled with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*[f].

Theſe Words of *Job*'s, now read unto you, I have been deſired by our deceaſed Brother, a young Flower gathered out of this encloſed Garden, to preach from to you, the Living in *Jeruſalem:* They had been Words of Comfort and Joy unto his Soul, ſince he knew the Lord, and found them pleaſant in his Death, when he told ſome of you, the laſt Lord's Day, That the Time of his Departure was at hand, and that he ſhould be cut off from the Land of the Living: And was not ſtartled at the Stroke, for he knew in whom he had believed. The Words of the Text I ſhall conſider in the following Manner.

I. Take Notice of *Job*'s Queſtion, *If a Man die, ſhall he live again?*

II. Shew, that the Days of the Saints Service, Trials, and Afflictions, are all

[e] Iſa. l. 11. [f] 1 Pet. i. 8.

appointed by the Lord; infinite Wiſdom has bounded them.

III. Shew, what this waiting and longing of *Job*'s was for, *Till my Change come*; and ſhew what Change this is; and let you ſee, that not one of us is exempted from it.

IV. Shew, what the Work of God's Hands is in the Text; and let you ſee, how the Lord has a Deſire to this Work of his Hands. Like a curious Artificer, as one expreſſeth [g], who, when he has made a curious Piece of Work, takes it all to pieces, yet in Time, from the Deſire he hath to it, he puts it together again. So will the Lord do to the Work of his Hands in the Text.

I. We ſhall enter upon the Queſtion it ſelf, and ſpeak to it in the following Manner.

1. We may ſuppoſe, that he puts a negative upon the Queſtion; no, he can't live again; that is, ſo as he once did, to enjoy his Poſſeſſions, his Friends and Companions, and return to his former Station of Life; no, this is a vain Hope, and yet ſome ſuch there have been, that have talked at that rate [h]. But *Job* knew otherwiſe; he knew that at

[g] Caryl *upon* Job.

[h] Limeſtreet *Sermons*, Gill *upon the Reſurrection*, Vol. II. p. 237.

Death

Death he ſhould, as you and I ſhall, take a total Farewel of all our Companions and Fellow-ſaints. This was *Job*'s Judgment in the Matter, *Chap.* vii. 8, 9, 10. *The Eye of him that hath ſeen me ſhall ſee me no more: Thine Eyes are upon me, and I am not: So he that goeth down unto the Grave ſhall come up no more: He ſhall return no more to his Houſe, neither ſhall his Place know him any more.* This was the Faith of all the Saints of old. Thus *Hezekiah* opens his Complaint [i], *I ſaid in the Cutting off of my Days, I ſhall go to the Gates of the Grave: I am deprived of the Reſidue of my Years. I ſaid, I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord,* (which I underſtand to be the Meſſias that he expected) *in the Land of the Living: I ſhall behold Man no more, with the Inhabitants of the World.* He knew that he ſhould then converſe no more with the Lord in his Temple and Worſhip, as he had done; no more go up in Company with the Saints to keep an holy Day: No, we cloſe our Eyes upon all this in Death, and to this Work, Worſhip, Converſe, and Communion with the Saints in this World, we return no more.

2. Neither doth *Job* make any doubt of the Doctrine of the Reſurrection, in this Queſtion, *If a Man die, ſhall he live again?* No. This was one Article in *Job*'s Creed he was

[i] Iſa. xxxviii. 10, 11.

well

well inſtructed in, and that for himſelf, which is more than to believe it barely as a Doctrine: *I know*, ſaith he, *that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth: And though after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another's, though my Reins be conſumed within me.* Indeed, when the Body ſhall thus live again every Eye ſhall ſee him, and for themſelves too; but not as *Job* ſpeaketh. Oh! how dreadful a Sight will that be, when like *Balaam*, *They ſhall ſee him, but not nigh*; that is, not nigh by Relation and Intereſt, as their Friend and Goel, near Kinſman, as *Job* ſhould. This Doctrine the Church was, by the Light of Revelation, trained up in, in all Ages. *Daniel* ſpeaks of it in his Book; and *Iſaiah*, and *David*, and the reſt of the Prophets. They ſhall, *that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth, awake, ſome to everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame and everlaſting Contempt* [k]. This Doctrine has ever ſupported the Faith of the Saints, in hopes of ſeeing Chriſt for themſelves, as their Redeemer, and converſing with the Saints again. *Martha* knew this, and declares her Faith in it, *I know*, ſaith ſhe, *that he ſhall riſe again in the Reſurrection at the laſt Day* [l]. But,

[k] Dan. xii. 2. [l] John xi. 24.

3.

3. We may ſuppoſe the Words of *Job* here (*If a Man die, ſhall he live again?*) to be ſpoken in a Way of Admiration, as a divine Extaſy of Joy and Gladneſs, to ſet forth the Wiſdom and Power of God, in that ſtupendious Work of God in the Reſurrection of the Body; that will, to a notwithſtanding the Rottenneſs and Corruption that it paſſeth under by Death, and the many hundred Years that the Fathers of the Old Teſtament Church, and the Apoſtles of the New, have been in their Graves, yet ſhall live again; for all Things are poſſible with God [m], though it's a Myſtery that is above the Wiſdom of Men to comprehend. Oh! how did the Belief of this Truth make *David* ſay with Joy, *Wilt thou ſhew Wonders to the Dead? Shall the Dead ariſe and praiſe thee? Selah. Shall thy Loving-kindneſs be declared in the Grave? Or thy Faithfulneſs in Deſtruction* [n]? His Soul rejoiced in this Truth; it was as a reviving Cordial to him under the Conſideration of his Death; and this Doctrine the Holy Ghoſt breaths Comfort in it, to all the Saints of God. Yea, our Lives, of all Men, would be moſt miſerable, if our Hope did not extend beyond the Grave; nay, and we leave our Fleſh in hope there. *If in this Life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all Men moſt miſerable* [o].

[m] Matth. xix. 26. [n] Pſal. lxxxviii. 10. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 19.

II. We ſhall proceed to ſhew, that all the Time of the Saints Conflicts and Trials here is limited and appointed: It's ſo with every Man, as we might ſhew; but I ſhall confine my ſelf unto the Called of God. *All the Days of my appointed Time will I wait till my Change come.*

1. There is an appointed Time for our natural Birth into the World; we come into this World under a Divine Appointment or Purpoſe. None of theſe Things fall out by Chance; God's Purpoſes are greatly concerned about us, ſo long as we are in it; and it's equally concerned about our going out of it. *Job* had paſt through the former, his Birth-purpoſe; but the latter, when he ſpake theſe Words, was future to him, and therefore his Faith and Patience was kept up, waiting till his Change came, till the Lord ſhould diſpatch the Meſſenger Death to ſummon him hence. This is the Language of the wiſe Man *Solomon*, *There is a Time to be born, and a Time to die: Yea, to every Thing there is a Seaſon, and a Time to every Purpoſe under the Heavens*[p]. For God has ſet the Bounds of every Man, that we can't paſs them; he has number'd our Months[q]. Our Days here are like the Days of an Hireling, that are running out: Every Day

[p] Eccl. iii 1, 2. [q] Job xiv. 5.

ſhort-

ſhortens our Time; the Sum or Number of them none of us can tell; but the Lord, that great Arithmetician, who knows the total Number of them, they are order'd by him: *My Times*, ſaith *David*, *are in thy Hands*[r].

2. It's not enough that our Days are numb'er'd and appointed; but the Word that we render in our Text, Appointed, ſignifies a Warfare; ſo *Job* makes uſe of it in *Chap.* vii. 1. *Is there not an appointed Time for Man on the Earth?* Or, is there not a Warfaring Time to Man upon Earth; Or, all the Days of my Warfare will I wait: So *Caryl* upon the Text[s]. Not only the preciſe Time is fixed by God, but all the Work, Sufferings, Temptations, and Trials of every kind, that we are to paſs through, are all determined by him; yet *Job* was helped to ſay, he would wait all the Time of this Warfare. Oh! let it be obſerved, that from the firſt Moment that the Holy Ghoſt breathed ſpiritual Life into thy Soul, thou art called out to War; and how many are the ſharp Conflicts that paſs between Fleſh and Spirit, Sin and Grace, Faith and Unbelief, the new Creature and carnal Reaſon? And the ſharp Conteſts that there are between thee and Satan, that old Enemy of thy Soul and mine? *For we wreſtle not with Fleſh and*

[r] Pſal. xxxi. 15. [s] Caryl, *Vol.* VI. 581, *Ch.* 7. *v.* 1.

Blood only, but with strong Principalities and Powers, and against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, and against spiritual Wickedness in high Places[t]. Oh, how often are thy Fears raised on the Account of them, that thou shalt one Day perish by the Hand of them! yea, thou art ready to look upon some of God's Worthies, that have for a Time been flung in the Battle, and wounded in the Warfare; and, with the great Apostle, thou hast been ready to say, *Oh! wretched Man that I am*, or (tired out Man, as some read it) *who shall deliver me?* yet, Soul, dost thou not find the Arms of Jehovah underneath thee, notwithstanding all thy Clouds and Darkness? Art not thou helped to say, as *Job*, I will wait still, it will be at an End by and by? Tho' thine Enemies are too much for thee, they are not too much for thy Captain; he will stand at thy Back to raise thee up when thou art thrust down: Is he not at Times to our Souls as a broad River to refresh us? And doth he not give thee some Earnest that he will in a little Time land thee on the other side of that peaceable Shore, *where no Galley with Oars shall pass thereby*[u]. The Lord, by this Prophet, speaks to the Church in such a comfortable Manner as this, to encourage her still to go forward; *Comfort ye,*

[t] Eph. vi. 12.

[u] Isa. xxxiii. 21.

com-

comfort ye, my People, ſaith your God, ſpeak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, *and cry unto her, that her Warfare is accompliſhed*; that is, it is ſet, and it will not exceed its Time; it will be over in a little Seaſon; it may be with ſome of us before the next Lord's Day, for we know not what a Day may bring forth; and, *Now is your Salvation nearer than when ye firſt believed* [x].

3. Let us obſerve, that this warfaring Time is with ſome longer, and others ſhorter; ſome of the Children of God are to be long engaged as Soldiers of Chriſt in this War, that have been in many a Campaign, and have received many Blows, and have got many a Scar in the Battle, and were ſometimes near to Death, in their own Apprehenſions, and concluded many a Time, that they ſhould be foiled and overcome therein by the Devil, and the World, or Corruptions, theſe *Canaanites* in the Land. Yea, the Remembrance of theſe Things, and how the Lord has bound up the broken Bones of his fallen Children, and healed all their ſpiritual Diſeaſes, and forgiven them their Iniquities, makes them glory in the Captain of their Salvation. Oh, the Comforts and Conſolation he hath brought into your Souls afterward, when he hath healed your Backſlidings, and put up all! Nay, many

[x] Rom. xviii. 11.

in this Warfare have fought their Way through the Crowd of Trials and Sufferings, and have loſt their Lives in the Cauſe; theſe are ſome of the Valiants of *Iſrael*, who loved not their Lives unto Death: Theſe bore the Heat and Burden of the Day; *Theſe are they which came up out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb* [y]. Oh! how long are ſome wadeing through this Wilderneſs full of Trials and Diſtreſſes, long, heavy, and great ones, almoſt wore out with them, yet the Warfare not at an End; like old *Simeon*, that can no longer handle the Sword or Spear, but can only wait, like *Job*, preſſed down with Trial, for a Diſcharge: *Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace* [z]. It may be, ſome of you have had a long Standing in the Church, and your working Time being over, you long to go to Reſt, and lay down your Head in the Duſt; but your Father has yet need of you here; he don't yet ſay to you, Come up hither; but you are like *Jacob*, numbering up your Days; tho' you can't ſay with him, *That the Days of the Years of your Pilgrimage are an Hundred and thirty Years* [a], yet you are ſaying, they are filled up with Trials; that you are at Times preſſed under them, but he will bring you to your Graves as a Shock of Corn in its

[y] Rev. vii. 14. [z] Luke ii. 29. [a] Gen. xlvii. 9.

Seaſon;

Seaſon [b]; he will be your Joy and Crown then, and your preſent Support now, to ſtrengthen your Hearts, for he will be your Portion for ever [c]. Some of you are juſt liſted under the Banner of Chriſt; he dandles you upon his Knees; you are not yet called out to put on the Coat of Mail to go out to War; it's the firſt Year of your Eſpouſals, the Lord exempts you for the preſent, as of old he did them that were married, for the firſt Year [d]; he gathers you with his Arms, and carries you in his Boſom [e], and makes your Cup run over with Joy. Yea, his Soul deſires the firſt ripe Fruits: Some of your Fruits are ſooner ripened in your Gardens than others. We read of Fruits put forth by the Sun [f]; that is, as in Nature the Sun ripens ſome Fruits ſooner than others, ſo in Grace (Converts made ſo by Chriſt, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, are his Fruits) and are often times ripened in a little while: Some are ſpeedily ripened, and ſo are gathered before others; others ſtand many a Shock, and cold and pinching Blaſts, but by the Gardener gathered at laſt, at the appointed Time: So let our Days be many or few, the Lord will do his Work compleat, and then in his own Time gather them. Thus the Church anſwers the Daughters

[b] Job v. 26. [c] Pſal. lxxiii. 26. [d] Deut. xxiv. 5.
[e] Iſa. xl. 11. [f] Deut. xxxiii. 14.

of

of Jeruſalem, *My Beloved is gone down into his Garden, to the Bed of Spices, to feed in the Gardens, and to gather Lilies* [g]. Chriſt takes pleaſure to gather his beautiful Ones, the Lilies in his Gardens; he has a Right to them; he has waſhed theſe Lilies, and made them white in his own Blood. *Solomon, in all his Glory, was not arrayed as one of theſe.* *Solomon*'s Attire was the Produce of Mens Workmanſhip, but ſo was not the Lilies; neither is the Adornings of the Saints, it's all of and from Chriſt himſelf; he maketh his Saints beautiful, as they are in his own Eyes, and in their own too, when they ſee themſelves cover'd with that glorious Garment of Salvation, which is the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; he ſaith himſelf of thee then, Soul, that *thou art all fair* [h], and without ſpot; he makes thee perfect through that Comelineſs which he puts upon thee [i]. But obſerve what Chriſt doth in his Garden, not only feed his Lilies, but gathers them (what is that? you may ſay) why, it's to tranſplant them into the Paradiſe of God [k], that they may eat of the Tree of Life: And when he doth this, it's in his appointed Time, not before. This was the Caſe of our deceaſed Brother; he had but a ſhort Standing [l] in

[g] Sol. vi. 2. [h] Chap. iv. 7. [i] Ezek. xvi. 14. [k] Rev. ii. 7.

[l] Had been a Member but 16 Months; the Lord began his Work upon him when he was about 16 Years old, and he was called home at 23.

this

this Church; he was called young, and planted young, and gathered young; the Lord was carrying on his Work apace, that he might be made meet for Glory. His Lord's Days were his beſt Days, as he uſed to ſay to me, and others; he hardly knew what a Lord's Day was, but it was as the Gate of Heaven to him: He uſed to call them gleaning Times; nay, he was favoured by our ſpiritual *Boaz* to glean amongſt the Sheaves, eſpecially at the Table of the Lord; and the laſt in particular (which was the laſt Day he was with us) Oh! how did his Cup then run over with the Wine of the Kingdom, in the Song we then cloſed the Supper with, in the 2d Chapter of the *Song of Solomon*, ver. 5, 6, 10.

I with great Joy ſat in his Shade,
His Fruits I ſweet did taſte;
He brought me to his Houſe of Wines,
His Love-flag o'er me caſt.

With Flaggons ſtay, with Apples me
Chear up, for Love-ſick I.
Under my Head his left Hand doth,
His right about me lie.

My Well-beloved he did ſpeak,
And unto me did ſay,
Ariſe, my Love, my comely One,
Come thou alſo away.

4. During

4. During this appointed Time he makes them meet for Glory, by performing his Work upon them, and leading them with *Job* into a patient Submiſſion unto his Will, in waiting all the Days of their appointed Time: So that Patience muſt have its perfect Work [m]. Though your Way through this Wilderneſs may be rugged and rough, yet the Lord will guide you through it. Holy *Job* experienced much of it; he is recorded for his many and great Afflictions, yet the Spirit of God held him up at Times, that he did not ſink under theſe Waters of Diſtreſs, though the Devil and his Wife would have had him diſcharge himſelf from the Warfare; but the Lord was with him to uphold him: *Shall we receive Good at the Hand of the Lord and not Evil* [n]? So though we may ſometimes think the Lord deals hardly with us, and puts our Feet into the Stocks, *Chap.* xiii. 27. of Affliction, yet all that while the Lord the Spirit is working his Saints up in their Wills, in ſome good Meaſure, to be conformed unto his Will; *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God* [o]. This is one Path the Spirit of the Lord leads his People into, to bring them over to kiſs the Rod; this is his ſanctifying Work upon the Will; he will make you and I ſay under

[m] James i. 4. [n] Job ii. 9, 10. [o] Rom. viii. 14.

all, it's the Lord, let him do whatſoever pleaſeth him: None but the Lord can do this, our Natures are ſo full of Rebellion againſt the Ways of the Lord, eſpecially when they are ſtrowed with Trials. It was with great Pleaſure that I obſerved, in our deceaſed Brother, not one complaining, or impatient Expreſſion, in all his Illneſs; tho' in the prime of his Days, and had pleaſing Proſpects before him, yet I could not perceive an unbounded Deſire after Life, but reſigned unto the Will of God, willing to live or die, as it pleaſed the Lord; he was helped to juſtify him in what he was now about to do with him, and could ſay, It was a Cup that his Father had put into his Hand to drink, and ſhould he not drink it? So the Lord the Spirit conforms the Members in their Reſignation unto Chriſt the Head in all Things [p]; for by all theſe Trials we are made to know, that every Grace of the Spirit is working up unto a Fitneſs for Glory. So that the Saints, at Times, can glory in all their Trials, knowing *that Patience worketh Experience, and Experience Hope, and that Hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the Love of God is ſhed abroad into our Hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, which is given unto us* [q].

[p] John xviii. 11. [q] Rom. v. 4, 5.

III. We ſhall now enter upon that which he is ſaid in the Text to wait for; *All the Days of my appointed Time I will wait till my Change come.* If it is aſked, what he meaneth by this Change in our Text? I anſwer in general, it's Death that he ſpeaketh of. *Job* lived to ſee many Changes; he lived in a World ſubject to Changes; *The Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*[r]; he had Changes in his Family; Breach upon Breach; Changes in his Subſtance, from a Fulneſs and Plenty reduced to Emptineſs; from Health in his Body to Wounds and Diſeaſes; an empty Houſe, and an empty Purſe too. He had Changes in his Soul, from Light to Darkneſs; from pleaſant Frames to diſconſolate ones; from ſtanding in high Eſteem in his Friends Account, but now rated as an Hypocrite and a wicked Man: Theſe were no ſmall Trials to him; but *Job* knew, that in all theſe Changes his Lord and Redeemer did not, nor would not change, in point of Intereſt and Relation, whatever he might do by way of Manifeſtation. I can't ſee any Reaſon to think, as ſome have done, that by Change here, he expected the Face of Things in his Perſon and Family to be alter'd, and made better; no, he had not the leaſt Ground of hope for this Change; and leſt we ſhould be at a loſs to know his

[r] 1 Cor. vii. 31.

Mind,

Mind, ſee how expreſs he is in this Matter [s], *I know that thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all Living.* Theſe were the Thoughts of his Heart, *Thou wilt call, and I will anſwer*; that is, call to Death, by theſe providential Remembrancers. As though he ſhould ſay, Every Pain that I now have, in this Condition, ſpeaketh Death to me. This is one Way the Lord calls to us. God's Voice is in every Providence; he ſpeaks in them and by them unto us. Thus he calls once, yea, twice, again and again, as he did to *Hezekiah*, in his Sickneſs, *Set thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live* [t]. The Change that *Job* expected therefore to paſs under, was a Change by Death; he knew that it was appointed for Man once to die [u]. It was ſuch a Change he had never made, and ſhould make but once, as you and I ſhall in a little Time. There is no fleeing from this King of Terror; there is no buying off this Change, or bribing of Death; your deareſt Friends can't hold you, when God calls to this Change, how near and dear ſo ever they may be to you in this Life: It's not the high and mighty, and noble Ones of this Earth, that can ſtand againſt Death; no, no, it will viſit the Throne as well as the Beggar upon the Dunghill, as

[s] Job xxx. 22, 23. [t] Iſa. xxxviii. 1. [u] Heb. ix. 27.

we have lately ſeen; and where there is no more than Nature it may well ſhock the Perſon when it comes, for Death has a dreadful Sting in it; *The Sting of Death is Sin* [x]; it binds over the Sinner to the laſt Judgment, that is attended with the Curſe; after Death the Judgment; and as Death finds the Man, ſo it leaves him; ſo that if out of Chriſt, a dreadful Change, for it is an irreverſible one, for as the Tree falls ſo it lieth [y]. But, Oh! happy Change unto the Saints. *Job* believed it would be ſo to him, and could ſay, If the Lord called he would anſwer; and you ſee the Ground upon which this is founded, for he knew that he had a living Redeemer, one that was to pay his Debts, and deliver him from going down to the Pit [z]: And therefore to all ſuch Perſons let this Change come when it will, it ſhall go well with them; *Say ye to the Righteous, it ſhall go well with them* [a]. Oh! bleſſed Change, from Mortality to Immortality. Let us deſcend to ſome Particulars, and ſhew, why Death is called a Change: And,

1. By Death we change our Company. In this World the Saints have ſome Company that troubles them, and is as bad to them as the Wicked in *Lot*'s Day were to him,

[x] 1 Cor. xv. 56.
[y] Eccleſ. xi. 3.
[z] Job xxxiv. 24.
[a] Iſa. iii. 10.

they

they vex our righteous Souls[b], while we hear them belch out ſuch Oaths and Curſes, as though they were infernal Spirits let out of Hell amongſt us; theſe we ſhall then be no more troubled with, but while you are here Providence has ſo ordered it that you can't avoid them; your Buſineſs and Concerns of Life caſt them in your Way; nay, there is the Corruption of our Natures, Indwelling-Sin, it's a Companion, and a cloſe one too, that we can't get rid of, nor run from it if we would; though we don't like it, yet we can't get free from it; oh! how it made an Apoſtle, with all his Gifts and Grace, to call out, *O wretched Man, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death*[c]! All his Bonds were not to him, to make him cry out as this Body of Sin and Death did. Well, at Death we ſhall ſee them, nor complain of them no more; yea, by Death we change Company with regard unto the Saints themſelves, we leave the imperfect part of them to go to the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect[d]. Don't your Souls ſometimes long to be with them, to be gathered to your People or Company? Oh! the Way to them is through the Waters of *Jordan*, but the Lord hath promiſed to be with thee in theſe Waters: *When thou paſſeſt through the Waters, I will be with thee*[e]. The Saints are not

[b] 2 Pet. ii. 8. [c] Rom. vii. 24.
[d] Heb. xii. 23. [e] Iſa xliii. 2.

now

now Strangers to one another, but Fellow-Citizens of the ſame City; but this River parts them from us, and we from them, but through it Chriſt will carry us; we ſhall not be Strangers unto them then, any more than we were here; we ſhall have Pleaſure in their Company, and Joys and Worſhip; theſe are the Companions we are bound to, and go to by Death; there ſhall then be a perfect Harmony in all that glorious Company. *The Inhabitants do not ſay they are ſick, for the People there have their Iniquities forgiven them* [f]. *There the Wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the Weary be at reſt* [g].

2. By Death we change our Places. Our Reſidence for a Time is in this World, but this is not our home; we are bound to another Country, even to Heaven it ſelf, into which Chriſt is locally entered, *For the Heavens muſt receive him till the Times of Reſtitution of all Things* [h]; that is the Reſidence of the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect; that is the Manſion-Houſe that our Lord told his Diſciples of, that he was going to prepare a Place for them in. *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions, if it were not ſo I would have told you, I go to prepare a Place for you; and if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again and receive you to my ſelf, that where I am, there ye may*

[f] Iſa. xxxiii. 24. [g] Job iii. 17. [h] Acts iii. 21. [i] John

be

be alſo [i]. Heaven, he tells us, is his Father's Houſe, and it is for us to dwell in. The World in which we now are is a Wilderneſs, a howling Wilderneſs, through which you and I at preſent are called to travel, and like Travellers on the Road, we put in to ſome Inn or another for Entertainment and Refreſhment by the Way; and ſometimes the Entertainment is better than at other Times, juſt as our Lord makes it; now and then a Promiſe, and at other Times a pleaſant Proſpect of the City afar off, that goodly City, to which we are bound; but the beſt Accommodation we meet with at an Inn is not like what we have at home; our Hearts are there, and we talk of it, and want to be at it. Oh! How is it with your Hearts? Are they not at Times raiſed to Heaven, your Father's Houſe? For here we are but Strangers and Pilgrims, as all our Fathers were; for ſo long as we are in the Body ſo long are we abſent from the Lord, therefore our Souls deſire at Times to be abſent from the Body, that we might be preſent with the Lord [k]. Are there not Deſires of Soul wrought by the Spirit of God in thee to be with Chriſt? For that is what the Saints long to be diſſolved for; that's uppermoſt upon their Hearts; he is the chiefeſt Object of Delight to us here, and

[i] John xiv. 2. [k] 1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8.

will

will be ſo unto us there, that we can't reſt till we are with him. To converſe with Angels, and the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect, is much; but to ſee Chriſt, and to converſe with Chriſt in our glorified Nature, is the great Deſire of our Hearts; and to know more of him, and of God in Chriſt, is that which we are born unto, as we have paſſed from Death unto Life; ſo that all the pleaſant Entertainments we have here in Goſpel-Ordinances and Promiſes, only ſerve to ſharpen our ſpiritual Appetites after Heaven, our home, and that, becauſe Chriſt is there: *For I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better* [l]. The Apoſtle had ſet Sail for Heaven before the great Pilot had given the Word of Command, but was Wind-bound by the Need the Church of Chriſt had of him. It's Chriſt's Preſence that makes a Child of God long to die, to be with him, and to be more acquainted with the great Myſteries of God in all his Perſon, Love and Grace, than we can take in of them in this imperfect State, *For now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face: Now we know but in part, then ſhall we know as we are known* [m].

3. By Death we change our Comforts not for Kind, but for Degree and Continu-

[l] Phil. i. 23. [m] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

ance. Here we have, now and then, ſome Flowings in of Conſolation upon our Souls, but it don't abide. We are like muſical Inſtruments, that are often out of Tune, and need much Repairing; but *Job* had this as a Stay to his Faith, that then it ſhould be otherwiſe when his Change came. *Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* [n]. Here we come up to Ordinances, and ſometimes meet with a good Day; again we attend, and we go away ſad, becauſe we found not him whom our Souls love; ſometimes we ſee the King in his Beauty, and at other Seaſons loſe ſight of him, which makes the Soul long to be where our Harps will never be out of tune. Here is much Fluctuation in our Joys and Comforts, they ebb and flow as the Tide doth; Sin and Satan, and Unbelief, rob us of our Comforts, and damp our Joys; but then we ſhall make Melody without Interruption, in our Hearts, to the Lord; we ſhall then have a perpetual Reſt from all our Sorrows [o], and Fears, and hard Bondage, wherein we were made to ſerve. This Change will compleat all. *Ye now, ſaith our Lord, have Sorrow; but I will ſee you again; and your Hearts ſhall rejoice, and your Joy no Man taketh from you. It's only now* that we have Sorrow, it will be all over

[n] Pſal. xxx. 5.

[o] Iſa. xiv. 3.

and done with on the other Side; it's only here that you have your Troubles and Fears, and Caſtings down, for theſe Things are all temporal, they will vaniſh away anon, when eternal Things take place; the one is limited, the other unlimited. Now you have Sorrow, but Chriſt will ſee you again, and then your Joy ſhall remain, and be full. The Preſence of Chriſt here to us, is but like the Viſit of a Traveller that turns in to tarry but for a Night, and on a ſudden he is gone. There is no Sorrow like this unto a Child of God, when the Sun of Righteouſneſs withdraws, or ſets in a Cloud; that we can't tell how to bear, yet this is the Way the Lord leads his People till this Change come. This our Brother experienced, when he ſaid to one of this Church a few Days before he died, he ſhould doubtleſs come again with Rejoicing, bringing his Sheaves with him [p]. The beſt Viſit, next to that he made you, when he firſt ſhined into your Souls, as the Day-ſtar from on high, will be this at Death, when this Change comes; for then he will change your Comforts, not for Kind, but for Degree, which ſhall be ever flowing and abiding; for the Lord Chriſt will *lead you to Fountains of living Waters, and God ſhall wipe away all Tears from your Eyes* [q]. You will then have

[p] Pſal. cxxvi. 6. [q] Rev. vii. 17.

done

done with Ciſtern Comforts, and live at the Fountain Head for ever.

IV. We ſhall alſo ſhew you, what Work this is in the Text that *Job* ſpeaketh of, and take notice, that the Lord hath a Deſire to this Work of his Hands. It's no wonder, that the Saints, who are born from above, ſhould have a Deſire to be where Chriſt is, and cannot reſt till it is accompliſhed: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon the Earth that I deſire beſides thee* [r]. But for the Lord himſelf, in all his glorious Perſons, to have a Deſire unto the Work of his own Hands, and will have it ſo, this made holy *Job* break forth in thoſe Words, *Chap.* vii. 17. *What is Man that thou ſhouldeſt magnify him? And that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine Heart upon him?* For *thou ſhalt call and I will anſwer*, for thou *ſhalt have a Deſire unto the Work of thine Hands.* We ſhall ſhew therefore, what this Work is in the Text that *Job* ſpeaks of; and what Deſire this is alſo of the Lord's.

1. We would by this Work underſtand the Work of God upon the Souls of his People: This is a glorious Work, and his Work by way of Eminency; it's wrought by the Spirit of God, and will not be compleated till this Change paſs upon us. The

[r] Pſal. lxxiii. 25.

Apoſtle *Paul* calls it a good Work; *Being confident of this very Thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you, will carry it on unto the Day of Chriſt* [s]. It's but begun in you, and it will not be finiſhed till your Change come. Oh! how often are you in fear that this Work of God in you will be deſtroyed, by reaſon of Indwelling-Sin and Corruption, and the Power of the World and Satan combining together againſt thee! And ſo it would, if the Lord had not a Deſire to this Work, to compleat and finiſh it, and that by the exceeding Greatneſs of his Power. Oh! what Exertion of his Almighty Power is laid out to maintain that Work in thy Soul! *Job* was as firm a Believer of the Doctrine of the Saints final Perſeverance, as ever the great Apoſtle himſelf was; and knew upon what Foundation it ſtood, as well as the Apoſtle *Paul*. *Job* knew it was owing unto a living Redeemer; *My Redeemer liveth*; and, *becauſe Chriſt lives we ſhall live alſo* [t]. The Saints, from this Work of God in them, are called his Workmanſhip in a ſpecial Manner; *It's he*, ſaid *David*, *that hath made us, and not we our ſelves*; that is, made us Saints, *the Sheep of his Paſtures*, that feed there, and that have heard his Voice [u], and felt his Power [w]. Theſe

[s] Phil. i. 6.
[t] John xiv. 19.
[u] John x. 27.
[w] Pſal. c. 3.

are

are a People formed for himſelf, and they ſhall ſhew forth his Praiſe [x]: They can and do ſpeak of his Power, Love, and Grace, as the Church in that *Pſalm* attributes what ſhe is unto the Lord, *He hath made us, and not we our ſelves*; no, to quicken and raiſe a Sinner from out of the Grave of Sin, is as much above the Work of Men or Angels, as to raiſe a Man corporally dead is above their Power. Well Soul, fear not, for he that is in thee, and for thee, is greater than all thine Enemies againſt thee, and he will finiſh his Work. Men may begin a curious Work and can't finiſh it; Death may put a ſtop to it; or they may want Power to effect it; or for their own Pleaſure deſtroy it, but it's not ſo here. Death don't deſtroy this Work, the Lord will not, nor Sin, nor the Devil, ſhall not; for as he is the Author, ſo he will be the Finiſher of your Faith [y]; he will, maugre all Attempts that are made againſt the Soul, in whom he hath begun this Work, and give the finiſhing Stroke unto it at this Change of thine, when you ſhall be ſanctified wholly in Soul, Body, and Spirit [z].

2. The Reſurrection of the Body is alſo another Work of God's Hands, which he will have a Deſire unto. That curious Fa-

[x] Iſa. xliii. 21.
[y] Heb. xii. 2.
[z] 1 Theſ. v. 23.

brick,

brick, which was wrought by him, framed, erected, and ſet up, when thou waſt formed in the loweſt Parts of the Earth[a]; this, though crumbled into Duſt, he will have a Deſire to, to raiſe it up again; the Bodies of his Saints, to the Honour of his Grace; and thoſe of the Wicked, to the Diſplay of his Juſtice, to all Eternity. It's the former of theſe that *Job* had in view; for the Bodies of the Saints are the Price of Chriſt's Blood, and the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt; too great to lay for ever under the Arreſts of Death, and the Power of the Grave. *Job* knew, that God his Redeemer would do this for him, and therefore he could lay his Head down in the Duſt with Joy: *Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer.* His Fleſh reſted in hope of a certain Reſurrection unto eternal Life; when Chriſt ſhould call him out of the Bed of Duſt, I'll anſwer, *for thou wilt have a Deſire to the Work of thine Hands.* The Union of Soul and Body is the Lord's Work, and he will effect it, that both Soul and Body may ſhare the Glory of that Day, when Mortality ſhall put on Immortality, and *theſe vile Bodies be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body, according unto the Working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all Things unto himſelf*[b]; and your Deſires and the Lord's meet in the ſame

[a] Pſal. cxxxix. 15. [b] Phil. iii. 21.

Thing;

Thing; for we ſhall then *behold his Face in Righteouſneſs, and be ſatisfied when we awake with his Likeneſs*; which will be the Happineſs of all the Saints, *Praiſe ye the Lord*[c].

3. But we ſhould take notice whoſe Deſire it is, not Man's, nor Angels; the Work ſpoken of is too great for them, but it's the Deſire of the great (Jehovah) of whom *Job* had been ſpeaking in the former Chapters, and to whom he here addreſſes himſelf, *Thou ſhalt call*; that is, thou, O Lord, who only art able to raiſe the Dead. And this Work, or Deſire, is an united Deſire of all the Perſons in the Trinity; they are all of them concerned in it, and equally ſo: God the Father will have a Deſire to the Work of his Hands, as he hath choſen them unto Salvation, before the Foundation of the World; ſo that he will bring them up from the Dead, that he may not loſe one of them; he will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave, and redeem them from Death, and ſay, *O Death, I will be thy Plague; O Grave, I will be thy Deſtruction, Repentance ſhall be hid from my Eyes.* Chriſt alſo hath a Concern in this Work, and a great one, for it's founded upon Union and Relation unto all his, as well as unto *Job*; he hath a Deſire to the Work of

[c] Pſal. xvii. 15.

his

his Hands; his Desire is strong and ardent after this Work, that he may see his Seed perfectly raised, that he travelled for, and bore their Sins, when he was made Sin for them; he will not suffer the Loss of one of them; nay, he must not, for God the Father hath entrusted all his in the Hands of Christ, with this Charge, that he raise them in the last Day. *This is the Father's Will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last Day* [d]; for Christ is both the meritorious Cause, as well as the efficient Cause of the Resurrection of the Saints Bodies; for the *Dead in Christ shall rise first* [e]. He will then see that his Blood was not shed in vain, but he will then raise up all them that he has bought at the Hand of Justice; yea, he is the Pattern and Exemplar of our Resurrection, for in that Morning we are to be made like him, and conformed unto his Image. Oh, glorious Day! when we shall be like him [f]. The Church, in the Song, might well rejoice, and say, *I am my Beloved's*, in Life and at Death, for Death can't separate us from the Love of God, *and his Desire is towards me* [g]. It's not your going into the Grave that will abate Christ's Desire after

[d] John vi. 39. [e] 1 Thess. iv. 16.
[f] 1 John iii. 2. [g] Cant. vii. 10.

you; no, it's not with him as it is with us (out of Sight out of Mind, we ſay.) When we bury our Dead out of ſight, Time wears off the Remembrance of them; but not ſo with Chriſt, for his Deſire after the Work of his Hands is ſuch, that he will bring us up out of the horrible Pit of Mire and Clay, though we ſhall have lain long amongſt the *Clods of the Valley* [h], and will make us ſing. Oh! he will viſit your Graves, as he did *Lazarus*, and ſay, *Come forth*: He will give you a gentle Touch, and ſay, it's high Time to awake out of Sleep, *Awake and ſing*, will be the Word of Command, *thou that dwelleſt in the Duſt, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs: And the Earth ſhall caſt out the Dead* [i]. Chriſt hath the Key of Hell and of Death; that is, of the Grave, and none can turn thee into the Grave but he; and none can let thee out but he; and he will, for he hath a Deſire to the Work of his Hands: Nay, it's part of his Interceſſion in Heaven, and it muſt be anſwer'd, *For him the Father heareth alway. Father, I will, that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold my Glory* [k]; and, how can this be, without the Body being raiſed? Beſides, the Holy Spirit of

[h] Job xxi. 33. [i] Iſa. xxvi. 19.
[k] John xvii. 24.

God has a glorious Hand in this Work; the Bodies of the Saints are the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and will he let his Temple lie always under the Rubbiſh of Rottenneſs and Corruption? No, for he that hath ſealed thee unto the Day of Redemption, in that Day, will raiſe thee to it, and put thee into the Poſſeſſion of it. *But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead dwell in you; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you*[l]. Thus Father, Son, and Spirit, are concerned in this glorious Work; he will have a Deſire to the Work of his Hands.

4. and Laſtly, This Deſire of the Lord's is an abiding Deſire; nothing can fruſtrate it, or make it void; there can be no Change in it. Men may deſire and approve of a Thing to Day, and repent of it to Morrow; but ſo don't the Lord; this Deſire of his unto his Saints, as the Work of his Hands will be for ever; it's a Part of the Glory comprized in that Text, The *Gifts and Callings of God are without Repentance*[m]. His firſt Purpoſe of Love and Grace towards his own, was, that they ſhould be to *the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace*[n] for ever to enjoy him; and he never will

[l] Rom. viii. 11.
[m] Chap. xi. 29.
[n] Eph. i. 6.

depart from that, nor ſuffer his Purpoſe to be broken. He will put them into the full of that prepared Glory, which he has deſigned them for; then, Soul, thou ſhalt never more go out of his Preſence, or ſuffer the Loſs of it, for the Lord will then make *thee a Pillar in his Temple, and thou ſhalt go no more out* [o]. This Change, as it will be thy laſt, ſo Death, and every Thing that has tried thee here, will then have an End, *And God will wipe away all Tears from thine Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain, for the former Things are done away* [p]: And ſo ſhall we be for ever with the Lord, and *filled with all the Fulneſs of God* [q]. I ſhall ſhut up all with two Words by way of Comfort and Encouragement. And,

1*ſt*. Unto the Aged of the Flock, that have had many Years of Trial, and gone through Service and Labour for the Lord; you ſee how ſovereign the Lord is in his Dealings unto the Children of Men; ſome that juſt bud forth in Grace are inſtantly removed to Glory; and many of you, it may be, have ſtood in the Lord's Houſe many Years, you wait for him, and think it long;

[o] Rev. iii. 12. [p] Chap. xxi. 4.
[q] Eph. iii. 19.

but he don't forget you; his Chariots will be ſent for you. In a little Time he will give his Angels charge to convey you home, for you are upon his Heart; yea, cannot you look back in this long Pilgrimage with Pleaſure, to ſee how he has provided for you, and taken Care of you; how his Love and Grace has, from the Morning of your Converſion, been your Support and Joy? And, will he leave you now? No, no. See what the Spirit of God in that Promiſe ſpeaketh to ſuch, *Even to your old Age I am he; and even to hoary Hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear you, even I will carry and will deliver you* [r]. Has he been a barren Wilderneſs to your Souls? Have you not found in every pinch of Difficulties, that he has put his everlaſting Arms underneath you, to ſupport, comfort, and ſtrengthen you? And this Promiſer will be with you, and deliver you in the laſt Trial of Life, that when your Fleſh and Heart may fail you, he will be the Strength of your Heart, and your Portion for ever. He will carry and deliver, you ſhall not ſink in deep Waters; no, he will not forſake you when your Strength faileth [s].

2. There is a Voice in this Providence, this ſudden Stroke, to you that are the Young of the Flock, who converſed with

[r] Iſa. xlvi. 4. [s] Pſal lxxi. 9.

him the other Day, and who took ſweet Counſel together (but now he is no more) he is entered into the Joy of his Lord; taken off in the Flower of his Days, in his *full Strength, his Breaſts full of Milk, and his Bones moiſtened with Marrow*[t]. He has finiſhed his Courſe, and that with Joy. Oh! with what Pleaſure did he break forth in thoſe Words of Joy to one of you, "I have been a poor "Sheep caught in the Briars of the Wil- "derneſs, yet, ſaith he, I have been waſh- "ed, and made white, and at the great "Day ſhall ſtand adorned with the Marri- "age Robe of the Lamb, and be amongſt "that happy Number, when he will ſay, "*Behold I, and the Children thou haſt given* "*me.* Oh! then, ſaith he, Chriſt and his "little Flock will ſtand together; Satan, "and the Wicked, muſt not come nigh "them; and thus he will receive his Saints "unto himſelf." But his Work is done, and you have yours before you; you are ſtill to ſerve the Lord in his Church, and wait on him, and work for him. The Apoſtle *John* ſpeaking to young Converts, ſaith of them, that they *are ſtrong, and the Word of God abides in them*[u]. Oh! look to it, your Strength is in Chriſt; your Adverſaries are many and ſtrong; but Chriſt, who is your Righteouſneſs and Strength, is an

[t] Job xxi. 23, 24. [u] 1 John ii. 14.

Over-

Over-match for all that are againſt you. Truſt not to your own Strength, to fight or war againſt any of your ſpiritual Enemies, nor to Grace received, but be ſtrong in the Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus. You have need of daily Supplies of Grace to help you in all your Times of Trouble, eſpecially when you are conflicting with Fleſh and Blood, and with Principalities and Powers; but you have a Throne of Grace to go unto, therefore ply the Throne, let the Lord hear often from you, it will turn to your ſpiritual Account. It may be, the next Voice of Death amongſt us may be to ſome of you; *Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Maſter of the Houſe cometh, at Even, or at Midnight, or at the Cock-crowing, or in the Morning; leſt coming ſuddenly he find you ſleeping; and what I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, Watch.* The Lord ſpeaks by this Voice to us all, for we know not but he may call ſome of us this Night. Oh! how is it with you? Are you aſleep or awake? It's a ſad Omen, when Saints are aſleep (bleſſed be God, it was not ſo with our departed Brother) yet it's rare to find it otherwiſe; this lethargick Spirit is a ſpreading Evil in this Day, the wiſe Virgins are hardly known from the fooliſh. It may be, you young Converts, your Love is yet perſuing hard after Chriſt; it's the Time of your firſt Eſpouſal; but how is it in general

ral amongſt the Saints? Do we not come under that Charge againſt *Epheſus? Neverthelefs I have ſomewhat againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt Love.* Should not this Face of Things ſend us to the Throne, that as he hath given us a Standing in the Church of God, he would trim our Lamps for us, and gird our Loins, and put the Staff of the Promiſe into our Hands, that we may walk Uſefully, Honourably, and Comfortably before him, all our Days; and that, when he calls, we may, with *Job*, anſwer and ſay, *Thou wilt have a Deſire to the Work of thy Hands.*

FINIS.

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